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No. 2 CIA Post May Be Up for Grabs

There are increasing reports that John McMahon, deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency, will be leaving for a job in the private sector, with fundamental improvements in our intelligence capabilities still to be realized. Observers are disheartened, however, by two names apparently being considered by CIA Director William Casey as McMahon's replacement: Lionel Olmer and Robert



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Gates. HUMAN EVENTS has previously reported on strong opposition to Olmer. Gates, who is presently in charge of estimates at CIA, is a former close associate of David Aaron, foreign policy adviser to former Vice President Walter Mondale.

Gates served in the Carter White House as a key policy aide and was a favorite of then DCI Stansfield Turner. Gates was a strong supporter of SALT II and has generally taken a soft-line view of Soviet aggressions around the world. Many believe that Gates retains close ties to the left-liberal Democrats and is, in fact, a potential DCI in a future Democratic administration. Conservative observers on Capitol Hill and elsewhere believe his appointment as deputy director would be harmful to Reagan Administration policies.

Conservatives wish that Casey would take a closer look at seasoned Gen. Paul Gorman, soon to leave as commander of the U.S. Southern Command in the Panama Canal, who has done a superb job in the critical Central American region. He has seen firsthand the need for a strong American intelligence capability, and his no-nonsense approach to bench-warmers' and handwringers could be a breath of fresh air at the bureaucratically hidebound CIA.

Another name being mentioned is Kenneth DeGraffenreid, the intelligence director on the NSC staff who was brought in by Richard Allen when he was national security adviser. DeGraffenreid has established a reputation as a knowledgeable, discreet, hard-working professional with unquestioned loyalty to the Reagan agenda.